

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

News Release

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Washington, D.C. -- The 12th National Veterans Golden Age Games, co-sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.A. (VFW), are scheduled to be held in Leesburg, Va., May 22-27.

Hosted by the VA Capitol Network, this multi-event recreational sports meet is open to all U.S. military veterans, age 55 or older, currently receiving care at a VA medical facility. More than 400 veterans are expected to compete in sports such as swimming, bicycling, horseshoes, bowling, croquet, and a pentathlon. The pentathlon includes softball hit, discus, shot-put, basketball free throw and airgun competitions.

"In addition to meeting veterans' acute health care needs, VA programs focus on their rehabilitative, emotional and long-term care as well," said VA Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs Togo D. West, Jr. "Events like the Golden Age Games are a vital part of VA's fitness programs for older veterans."

"The VFW is proud to be a co-sponsor of this very worthwhile event," said VFW Commander-in-Chief John E. Moon. "Each year more and more veterans find good health and happier living through the rehabilitative effects of athletic competition. Even those of us who are just spectators come away feeling better."

VA physicians and researchers have long been in the forefront of the growing fields of gerontology and geriatrics, offering innovative care programs to aging veterans such as geriatric evaluation and management units. In addition, VA researchers conduct extensive research into geriatric health issues in such areas as cardiovascular disease, nutrition, Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

Founded in 1899, VFW is the nation's oldest major veterans organization. Its two million members include more than one million World War II veterans, 528,000 Vietnam veterans, 426,000 Korean War veterans, and a growing number of Gulf War veterans.

VA's Capitol Network is comprised of VA medical facilities in Washington, D.C.; Martinsburg, W.Va.; and Baltimore, Md. The 1998 Games will be held at Xerox Document University in Leesburg, Va.

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